

Risk Assessment and Recidivism in Juvenile Sexual Offenders:

A Validation Study of the Static-99

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**Texas Youth Commission
2000**

Acknowledgments

The researchers would like to thank the following people for their assistance in completing this study:

Pat Logterman, LMSW-ACP, TYC Treatment Specialist, for guiding the research process and reviewing the paper at each phase of the research.

Dr. Chuck Jeffords, TYC Director of Research, for providing the statistics used in the analysis and invaluable assistance in interpreting the results.

Ms Estella Guillen for training on scoring the Static-99.

Ms Joyce Gremillion, TYC Records Administrative Technician, for assistance in obtaining the data from TYC records.

Dr. Jay Svinicki, TYC Director of Network Applications, IRD, for reviewing drafts of the research and providing valuable feedback.

Dr. Linda Reyes, TYC Asst. Deputy Executive Director- Rehabilitation Services for reviewing drafts of the research and providing valuable feedback.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Static-99 is an assessment tool using historical, static factors to gauge a sex offender's risk of re-offending sexually. The Static-99 has shown through validation research that it can differentiate among sex offenders with a low, moderate or high risk of recidivating sexually. Those offenders who are found to have a high-risk level will be subject to the newest sex offender registration and notification law in Texas, SB 1650. This law expands previous sex offender notification laws and mandates that the neighbors of a high-risk offender be notified by mail when s/he moves into the community. This law applies equally to adults and juveniles.

In accordance with SB 1650, the Risk Assessment Review Committee chose the Static-99 as its assessment tool and altered the scoring procedure based on their data. All Texas sex offenders 18 years or older are subject to assessment using the Static-99. One concern of using the Static-99 was that all sex offenders, 18-21 years of age, received a score of one in the following categories: age at time of release and marriage status. In order to obtain a high-risk level, an offender needs to score a four or more on the Static-99. Therefore, everyone within this population was automatically half way to being a high-risk sex offender. Research on juvenile sex offenders suggests that other characteristics may apply to offenders who were juvenile at the time the sex crime was committed.

The present study was part of an effort to validate the Static-99 for use with juveniles who committed their crimes as juveniles and were discharged from a secure facility between the ages of 18 and 21. This study used data on 49 juvenile sex offenders between the ages of 18 and 21 who were released from a Texas Youth Commission

secure facility. Each juvenile's file was assessed using the Static-99 and a risk level was assigned. Then each risk level was compared against the history of sexual recidivism for that offender.

This study found that the Static-99 did assign a high-risk level to all juvenile offenders (four juveniles) who were arrested for another sex offense within the four-year follow-up period. However, it also assigned to the high-risk category, 17 juvenile offenders who did not recidivate sexually. This raises questions about the rate of false positives observed in this study and the sensitivity of the instrument with adults who committed their sex crimes as juveniles. The original validation study by Hanson and Thornton found a fifteen-year recidivism rate of 36 percent for those who scored a four or higher on the Static-99, which also indicates a large percentage of over-predicting.

The high percentage of false positives is most likely attributable to the Risk Assessment Review Committee's decision to change the scoring system, making four or higher the High-Risk cutoff point. Hanson and Thornton used six or more points as the High-Risk cutoff point, and examined recidivism rates at five, ten and fifteen year periods. The use of only a four-year period in this study may have missed some recidivists, but it followed recidivism at the most crucial period for re-offending to occur, and still came up with a large percentage of false positives. This indicates that the instrument scores many more offenders as High-Risk than actually recidivate when using four as the cutoff score.

Individual items on the Static-99 were evaluated as a part of this study. Only three items were found to have statistical significance (Number of prior sex offenses, any non-contact sex offenses, and victimizing a non-relative). Several factors that were

assumed to be predictive did not show up as significant in this study (victimizing a stranger, male victim, having a history of prior criminal activity). Two items (marital status and age at time of assessment) on the Static-99 contained no variance and therefore no conclusions could be drawn.

Limitations of this study include the small sample size, short follow-up period, lack of differentiation among subgroups of sex offenders and a low recidivism rate. Based on these findings and the study limitations, it is recommended that the study be repeated with a larger sample size. Further research should be directed towards discovering the characteristics that best predict recidivism for juvenile sex offenders including female sex offenders and other subtypes of sex offenders.

INTRODUCTION

Agency Overview

TYC is responsible for the care and custody of delinquent youth between the ages of 10 and 21 who have been adjudicated for unlawful delinquent conduct and remanded to state custody by a court order. TYC currently operates 15 secure institutions and nine halfway houses across Texas (See Appendix A for a map of institutions). In addition, TYC contracts with a variety of facilities across Texas to provide additional bed space for the population of offenders that TYC cannot currently accommodate.

TYC's mission is comprised of four guiding principles: Protection, Productivity, Rehabilitation and Prevention (for a look at TYC's complete mission statement see Appendix B). In order to ensure that the agency runs effectively and carries out its mission, the administration of TYC is divided into several departments (see Appendix C for TYC's Organizational Chart). Rehabilitation Services is the department that oversees all of the health, educational, behavioral, social, and psychological needs of the delinquent youth of TYC. The Treatment and Case Management division of Rehabilitation Services is responsible for designing the rehabilitation programs at TYC facilities, training facility staff in the implementation of those programs, and evaluating the programs' efficacy.

The hallmark of TYC's rehabilitation services is the Resocialization program through which all youth must progress in order to be considered for release.

Resocialization is defined as:

"the process by which individuals learn new norms, rules and expectations for behavior that allow them to get their needs met without violating the rights of others. Successful Resocialization reconnects individuals to the larger society as a productive member of a shared community. Successful

Resocialization re-engages youth in a positive social contract wherein members of society agree to uphold certain rules of behavior for the good of all its members, individuals are accountable for their actions, and reparations are made when harm has been caused intentionally.”
(Resocialization Trainers Manual, 1995, p. 1.8)

Resocialization is based on the cornerstones of work, discipline training, correctional therapy, and education (see Appendix D for a description of the Resocialization program). Facility staff, including caseworkers, juvenile correctional officers, and staff psychologists, work with the youths on a daily basis to guide their progress through Resocialization. The average TYC youth has a minimum length of stay of nine months. However, TYC has the discretion of keeping a youth longer – up to his/her twenty-first birthday – if s/he is not progressing through Resocialization. While at TYC, youth are expected to complete the four Phases of Resocialization successfully in order to gain privileges and transition to parole or de-institutionalization.

Besides the general Resocialization program, there are several specialized treatment programs for youth that have needs that go beyond those addressed in the basic curriculum. These include programs for sex offenders, serious violent offenders, chemically dependent offenders, emotionally disturbed offenders and youth with mental retardation. Due to resource limitations, approximately forty percent of juveniles with high need for specialized treatment receive it.

Problem Statement

Historically, crimes of a sexual nature have been treated as lesser offenses, often with the victim being “blamed” for instigating the offense. However, in the late 1980’s and throughout the 1990’s, the impact and severity of sex crimes gained greater public awareness. In 1994, Congress passed Title XVII of the Violent Crime Control and Law

Enforcement Act of 1994, better known as the Jacob Wetterling Act. This law "required states to create registries of offenders convicted of sexually violent offenses or crimes against children and to establish more rigorous registration requirements for highly dangerous sex offenders" (Matson & Lieb, 1997, p. 3). States were penalized by a reduction in grant moneys if they had not complied with the law by September 13, 1997 (Matson & Lieb, 1997). May of 1996 marked the beginning of Megan's Law. This law amended the Jacob Wetterling Act of 1994 and stipulated that states be empowered with discretion in making judgments regarding the disclosure of information for public safety and protection (Matson & Lieb, 1997). States had to comply with Megan's law by September 13, 1997, the same compliance date as the original Jacob Wetterling Act.

In Texas, 1991 marked the passing of the first sex offender registration statute into law. This statute charged that offenders convicted of the following crimes had to register with local law enforcement: Indecency with a Child, Sexual Assault, Prohibited Sexual Conduct (incest), and Indecent Exposure (4th conviction). In 1993 Sexual Performance of a Child and Possession or Promotion of Child Pornography were added to the list and in 1995 Aggravated Kidnapping with the intent to violate or abuse a victim sexually was added. Burglary of a Habitation with intent to commit a sexual felony was also added while Indecent Exposure became registerable at the 2nd conviction.

Offenders convicted on/after September 1, 1995 were required to register for a 10-year period after their date of release. Exceptions were made in the case of those offenders who had committed Indecency with a Child, Sexual Assault, or Sexual Performance of a Child; those individuals had a lifetime registration requirement. It was not until 1997 that offenders who were convicted on two or more occasions for a sexually

violent offense were required to register every 90 days, with only annual registration for all other sexual offenses. Finally, in 1999 three non-sexual offenses (Unlawful Restraint, Kidnapping and Aggravated Kidnapping) were added to the list of registerable offenses. Of particular importance to this project was the enrollment of SB 1650 into law that year.

Senate Bill 1650 charged the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) with establishing a Risk Assessment Review Committee to develop or select an instrument to be used to assign a numeric risk level to each person subject to sex offender registration (see Appendix E for entire bill). The Committee is to assign a risk level of 1 (high) or 2 (moderate) based on the results of the risk assessment instrument. The numeric risk level is included in the Sex Offender Registration information. For those offenders with a numeric risk level of One, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) will provide written notice to every residential address within three blocks (subdivided) or within a one mile radius (non subdivided) of the offender's intended address. The notice shall include all registration information that is public under the Sex Offender Registration Act. DPS may also provide notice by other means such as public meetings, fliers, or local web sites. To assess the risk of sexual recidivism, the committee chose an existing instrument for adults and developed an instrument to assess risk in juveniles. Adults are defined as those 18 years and older and juveniles are those 17 years of age and below.

Static-99

When looking at possible risk assessment tools, the Committee searched for a tool that met the following characteristics. First, the Committee wanted a tool that had been studied and empirically tested for validity. Also, the tool needed to be relatively easy to score and to train staff to use. Finally, the Committee was looking for a tool with good

inter-rater reliability. The Static-99, developed by Dr. Karl Hanson and Dr. David Thornton, met all of these criteria (See Appendix F for a copy of the Static-99). In addition, the use of static factors in the Static-99 meant that staff would not have to perform face-to-face interviews with clients in order to complete the assessment. Face-to-face interviews would have required a greater time investment and more extensive training on the part of staff members, a resource that many of the agencies would have been hard pressed to provide.

The Risk Assessment Review Committee made one important change to the instrument. The original scoring range used by Hanson and Thornton on the Static-99 was 0-1 (low), 2-3 (medium low), 4-5 (medium-high) and 6 and above (high) (1999). The authors do not outline how they devised their scoring method for the Static-99; however, as the committee began to study the data they had collected, it was argued that the data pointed toward lowering the high-risk rating to four to catch more of the recidivists. While it was argued that lowering the cut-off would overrate many offenders, most of the committee supported it, preferring to err on the side of public safety. The decision was then made to regroup the scores so that four points and higher was now considered High-Risk and anything lower was a Moderate-Risk, thus eliminating a Low-Risk category altogether, as the law did not provide for a low risk level.

A limitation of the Static-99 is that it has only been validated with adult male sex offenders. The mean age of the offenders in the study was 33.5 years (Hanson and Thornton, 1999). However, this is important because predictive factors for sexual recidivism may differ between juvenile and adult sex offenders (Becker & Kaplan, 1988). When using the Static-99 with juveniles, one thing became apparent to the clinicians

administering the tool. Two items on the Static 99 would be true for every TYC youth: age and marital status. Other items, such as male victims, and the nature of the victim/offender relationship, have not been found to be valid predictors of recidivism risk for juvenile offenders. At the beginning of the assessment, juveniles would already have two of the four points required to be deemed high-risk, a situation that became especially important in light of the changes in scoring made by the committee. Therefore, questions about the validity of the instrument with this population arose among TYC staff. Due to the concerns of its clinical staff, TYC decided to spearhead the research to validate the Static-99 with its population of sex offenders.

Research Questions

Therefore, this evaluation seeks to answer the following questions:

- Is the Static-99 a valid and reliable instrument to predict sexual recidivism for juvenile sex offenders who are between the ages of 18 and 21 at the time they reenter the community?
- Are there items on the Static-99 which appear more predictive of sexual recidivism for young adults (18-21) than others?

Stakeholder Involvement Plan

There are a number of stakeholders concerned with this issue. The primary stakeholders are TYC, Texas Department of Safety, and The Risk Assessment Review Committee. TYC is the sponsoring stakeholder and will be supervising and providing data for the risk assessment research. TYC is invested in this research question because the registration of sex offenders directly affects a segment of its client population. TYC is concerned that it will become more difficult to find satisfactory placements for released

sex offenders. Some sex offenders can return home, but those who cannot are often placed in transitional housing such as TYC halfway houses or independent living apartments. With the enactment of S.B. 1650, DPS will provide written notification to the neighbors of all high-risk sex offenders.

While one notice may not cause too much alarm, if neighbors receive three or four notices in a short period of time, as in the case of a halfway house, there may be a backlash against the facility from the community. It is possible that TYC could lose many of its halfway houses and independent living program contracts, because of landlords who are afraid of the backlash. This would make it more difficult to place juvenile sex offenders without approved homes. TYC may be forced to hold juveniles longer until a proper placement is located.

The Department of Public Safety (TDPS) also has a stake in this issue. SB 1650 requires DPS to send out written notification on high-risk offenders convicted and adjudicated after January 1, 2000. If the assessment tool is too sensitive (catching an extremely large margin including many non-recidivists), then DPS will be spending more money than it needs to on this service. The law (SB 1650) does stipulate that the offender is responsible for paying for this service, but DPS will have to make the initial monetary investment with no guarantee that the offender will reimburse them. Logically, DPS should only spend money upon clients for whom the highest level of notification is appropriate; therefore, they have a vested interest in the Static-99's validity with the juvenile population.

The final primary stakeholder is the Risk Assessment and Review Committee. This Committee is invested in following the mandates of the SB 1650. While the law

allows the committee a great amount of leeway in its selection or creation of a tool, the committee has decided on several criteria that are important for the risk assessment tool to exhibit. The criteria are the following: the tool needs to be empirically based, have good predictive validity for sexual re-offending and have good inter-rater reliability. By validating the Static-99 with the juvenile sex offender population, the Committee will have a higher level of confidence that the Static-99 meets both the mandates of the law and their Committee requirements with adults and juveniles.

The youth that will be assessed by the Static-99, and the public at large, will be secondary stakeholders in the research process. An accurate assessment of risk is important to the juvenile offenders who will receive a risk rating. Being rated High-Risk can have important and sometimes detrimental effects on their lives. It is important that they receive an accurate risk rating, which will prevent having any unnecessary negative attention focused on those who are not high-risk to re-offend, and allow them a better opportunity to re-integrate successfully into the community. Having an accurate risk assessment instrument will also better protect the public by identifying those sex offenders that are most likely to re-offend, rather than causing alarm over sex offenders who will most likely not recidivate.

The validation study will be conducted using data on TYC youth that have been discharged. None of the other stakeholders will have direct involvement in the research procedure. Once the results have been formulated and made public, the Risk Assessment Committee will be able to use the information to determine if they should continue using the Static-99 on adult sex offenders who committed their crimes as juveniles, or adopt the juvenile assessment tool created by TYC and TJPC.

Program Need and Theory

Registration and tracking of sex offenders in Texas began in 1991, and the laws were further expanded in 1995 and 1999 to include the posting of information and a photograph of the released offender on a public web-site or newspaper ad (Ward, 1999). The impetus behind the laws were to make the public aware of pedophiles and other sex offenders who may still pose a threat when moving back into the community. Several famous incidents of children being killed by paroled child molesters, such as Megan Kanka in New Jersey in 1994, created a sense that something more needed to be done to protect children and keep sex offenders under better control (Ward, 1999). By having paroled sex offenders register with local law enforcement whenever they move back into a community, they would, theoretically, be easier to find and arrest if they commit any new crimes (Ward, 1999). By making information on their whereabouts public, communities would have a better chance of protecting themselves and their children by avoiding potentially dangerous situations.

The 1999 law, SB 1650, takes notification and registration a step further. The law requires a committee to assess the risk of sexual recidivism for sex offenders, and directly inform, by mail, the neighbors of the presence of a high-risk sex offender in their neighborhood (Ward, 1999). This law operates under the same principles as earlier laws, in that it seeks to make sex offenders more visible to their community and easier to track. The risk assessment component has been added as a means of better predicting who might be truly dangerous, thus adding a further component of public protection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview on Adult Sex Offenders

The research on juvenile sex offenders cannot be properly summarized without first taking a brief look at the adult literature. There exists a large body of research information on adult male sex offenders. Due to time limitations and subject matter relevancy, the majority of literature reviewed for this paper deals with risk assessment tools utilized with adult male sex offenders and common characteristics found within this population.

The Anatomy of Risk Assessment Tools

The literature outlines several risk assessment tools utilized with adult male sex offenders. Each one uses slightly different criteria to gauge the risk of reoffense. Wood and Cellini (1999) discuss the two types of risk factors that the various assessment tools look at to assess risk. *Static risk factors* are factors that cannot be altered over time (i.e. age at time of first offense and gender of victims) while *dynamic risk factors* are ones that can be altered over time (i.e. successfully completing treatment, change in belief systems regarding sexual offenses).

The method of risk assessment used also varies across the different instruments. Wood and Cellini (1999) break these methods down into four distinct categories. *Professional judgment* is the first category. With this method, a deduction of risk is obtained based on the opinion and practices of the professional performing the assessment. The next method is called *anchored, guided or empirical assessment*. With this method, an offender is classified based on a set of known risk factors. Information regarding the offender is gathered, and a decision is made on whether particular risk

factors are applicable or not. Based on these factors, an overall opinion about the risk of recidivism is formed. For example, if an offender has three or more victims, and one risk factor is two or more victims, that factor would apply to her/him.

Actuarial assessment is another method of assessment. This method "is based on ... a set of known risk factors. Unlike guided assessment ... the rules by which the factors are combined are explicit and a single score is derived to determine the offender's level of risk." (Wood & Cellini, 1999, p. 60). For example, an instrument that contains five risk factors can be scored from one to six, based on the responses to the different risk factors. As the person's score increases, his/her level of risk increases as well in clearly defined ways.

The final method is called *adjusted actuarial assessment*. This method begins by looking at concrete explicit factors. These factors may be adjusted when information not found within the actuarial assessment supports the change. A need to adjust the risk assessment stems from the opinion of the evaluator. For example, if a child molester with a low risk assessment score were to report that, upon release, he was going to apply for a job working at an elementary school to be close to "easy prey" his risk assessment score would be adjusted upward because of that statement.

Risk Assessment Tools

There are a number of risk assessment instruments currently being used with adult sex offenders, with a large body of literature describing and evaluating these tools. These instruments include the Hare Psychopathic Checklist (used in conjunction with other assessment tools), the Violence Risk Assessment Guide, and the Sexual Violence Risk-20, among others (Doren, 1999; Ferguson, Eidelson, & Witt, 1997; Hanson & Thornton,

1999; Rezmovic, Alexander, Sloane, & Seltser, 1996; Wood & Cellini, 1999). This study will examine the validity of the instrument known as the Static-99.

As stated earlier, the Static-99 is a combination of two previously existing tools- the Rapid Risk of Sex Offender Recidivism (RRASOR) and the Structured Anchored Clinical Judgement- Minimum (SACJ-Min) (Hanson & Thornton, 1999). The RRASOR is an actuarial assessment tool that looks at four static risk factors and yields five and ten-year estimates of risk (Wood & Cellini, 1999). The Structured Anchored Clinical Judgment- Minimum (SACJ-Min) is an anchored assessment technique that utilizes a stage approach with factors that are weighted according to their relative importance along explicit guidelines (Grubin, 1998; Hanson & Thornton, 1999). Therefore, the Static-99 is a tool analyzing *static factors* within the *actuarial assessment method*. The data generated by the application of the Static-99 helps professionals to assign a sexual recidivism risk assessment rating to adult sexual offenders.

Hanson and Thornton (1999) found that the Static-99 was an effective tool for discerning the difference between offenders with a lower or higher probability of recidivism. It has also been validated for a range of different types of adult sex offenders, such as rapists or child molesters, and the items provide a good balance between measuring criminal, anti-social traits and sexual deviance (Doren, 1999). The instrument was validated using long-term follow up data. The researchers assessed risk of recidivism at five, ten and fifteen year follow up periods, and were able to find significant risk rates at each of these points (Hanson & Thornton, 1999).

While the use of static factors makes the Static-99 relatively easy to score, the lack of dynamic factors is an acknowledged limitation for the instrument (Hanson &

Thornton, 1999; Wood & Cellini, 1999). The lack of dynamic factors by no means invalidates the Static-99, it simply means that the clinical judgment and the possible effects of punishment may need to be incorporated into the overall assessment process when appropriate and feasible.

Adult Recidivism Characteristics

There are a variety of different factors mentioned throughout the adult sex offender literature as possible indicators of recidivism. However, several static factors that are identified most often throughout the research will be discussed here. Hanson & Bussiere (1998), Motiuk & Brown (1996), Firestone, Bradford, McCoy, & Greenberg (1999) all identify the presence of a past sexual offense as one of the greatest indicators of future recidivism. Turvey (1996), Firestone, et al (1999) and Greenberg (1998) state that the existence of any past violent offense and/or the degree of violence within an offense are also possible indicators of future recidivism.

Another indicator that points towards a higher probability of recidivism is the presence of a male victim (Greenberg, 1998; Hanson & Bussiere, 1998). Studies by Turvey (1996) and Hanson & Bussiere (1998) suggest that the age of the victim is also a factor in recidivism- the younger the age of the victim, the higher the probability of recidivism. Finally, Firestone, et al (1999) and Hanson & Bussiere (1998) cite any previous criminal history as a possible indicator of sexual recidivism.

Methodological Limitations in the Adult Literature

Adult sex offender recidivism data is often contradictory in nature. Some studies assert that the recidivism of adult sex offenders is lower than commonly believed (Greenberg, 1998; Miner, 1999). At the same time, many studies maintain that

recidivism for sex offenses is underreported (Firestone et al., 1999; Rezmovic et al., 1996). Greenberg (1998), Rezmovic (1996) and Firestone, et al. (1999) all report several methodological weaknesses that may contribute to the wealth of conflicting data. These weaknesses include a lack of a common recidivism standard, different sample sizes and different sample compositions. Other common weaknesses are a sample too small to generalize findings, differences in data collection methods, differences in types of studies performed (single subject design, etc.) and varied follow up periods. All of these factors might contribute to the amount and variation of the research information. Unfortunately, the same methodological weaknesses found in adult studies may also exist in research done on juvenile offenders.

Scope and Nature of the Juvenile Problem

Historically, sex crimes, whether perpetrated by adults or juveniles, were not taken seriously. Juvenile sex crimes in particular were frequently written off as sexual experimentation on the part of the youth. As the awareness of the seriousness of sex crimes rose, so did society's need to understand the people who committed these types of crimes. The basis of research into juvenile sex offending started as a direct result of findings within the adult literature over the last decade. Sipe and Jensen (1998) and Blaske, Bourduin, Henggeler, and Mann (1989) found that many adult sex offenders reported the onset of their sexually offending behavior in adolescence. Becker and Hunter (1993) and Bischof, Stith and Whitney (1995) report that over 50percent of the adult males interviewed for their respective studies reported committing their first sexual offenses during adolescence.

Arrest Rates for Male Juvenile Sex Offenders

The most reliable source of information on juvenile crime rates comes from the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Uniform Crime Report (UCR). The UCR provides data on the number of crimes cleared by arrest and compares this number to varying demographic variables (i.e. age, race, gender, class of crime and type of crime). While this report probably underestimates the actual number of juvenile crimes, it does provide a basis upon which to gauge change and trends in known crime. Snyder (1999) analyzed the data produced by the UCR and found that 11 percent of all forcible rapes and 17 percent of all sex offenses (excluding forcible rape and prostitution) were cleared by the arrest of a juvenile male. Overall from 1997 to 1998 the number of total juvenile arrests in all categories fell 6 percent, however the percent of change for forcible rape and sexual offenses was much less, with a one percent and zero percent change respectively.

The graph in Appendix G is a good tool to gain some perspective on the scope of total crimes (cleared by arrest) committed by youth, in relation to the general population and in comparison to other age groups. This graph was generated using data from a table drawn from the 1998 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics (p. 331). The juveniles in the adolescent category comprise only nine percent of the total U. S. population but they account for 22 percent of all people arrested for crimes. The only other larger percent exists for the early adult category that comprises 15 percent of the total population and is responsible for 35 percent of all crimes. However, keep in mind that the span of years covered in the adolescent category is five years while early adult covers 10 years. The differences in the ranges of ages covered may affect the ratio represented by individuals

in the early adult category. When seen in this perspective, one can understand why juvenile crime is considered problematic in this country.

Again, it needs to be stressed that crime statistics include only arrest rates and may not represent the actual number of crimes committed, or give an accurate representation of the types of crimes committed. Unfortunately there exists no concrete way to measure the actual rate of crime committed by adolescents. Herein lies another limitation of the data available on juvenile sex offenders.

Recidivism Rates for Male Juvenile Sex Offenders

Another limitation in the research literature on juvenile sex offenders is a reliable baseline range for recidivism for sexually related crimes within this population. Without a somewhat accurate estimate of the rate of recidivism, it is difficult to outline the scope of the juvenile sex offender problem. Most recidivism statistics come as a result of data generated by various studies and cover a wide range of numbers. Within the literature, sexual recidivism for juveniles is estimated at anywhere from two percent (Rubinstein, Yeager, Goodstein and Lewis, 1993) to 43 percent (Schram and Milloy, 1995) depending on the source literature. The wide variance in these findings has to do with many of the same methodological weaknesses found in the adult studies including the type of population, data gathering techniques, study size, length of follow up period, and definition of recidivism.

For example, Rubinstein, et al (1993) followed 19 sexually assaultive male juveniles and 58 violent juveniles over an 8-year period to arrive at their findings while Schram et al (1995) studied a total of 139 male sexual offenders in the state of Washington. Of the 139, only 14 of them were juveniles. This study followed these

offenders (both juvenile and adult) from 7 to 47 months after they were released from a correctional facility.

A number of articles simply cited the research findings of earlier studies done on recidivism. When looking at the literature, this sometimes creates a confusing tapestry of references and cross-references. For instance, in a retrospective study done by Sipe (1998), he cited a recidivism rate of 14 percent as ascertained by research done by Smith and Monastersky (1986), who studied a group of 112 male juvenile sex offenders over a 17 to 49 month period. There exists still more variance when the literature is further reviewed. Becker and Hunter (1993) cited a study done by Schram, Milloy and Rowe (1991) that reported a recidivism rate of 10 percent with a 6.8-year follow up. Prentky, Harris, Frizzell, and Righthand (in press) documented a 7.5 percent recidivism rate in their analysis of a study done by Kahn and Chambers (1991). As one can see, the lack of a methodological standard makes reporting and predicting recidivism in research an inexact science at best.

Recidivism Rates for Juveniles in Texas

In some cases, it might help to have the recidivism data supplemented by data collected by individual states. Some states track their own juvenile sexual offender recidivism rates. In Texas, the rate of recidivism for juvenile sex offenders who have been committed to TYC are tracked by that agency. TYC tracks juvenile sexual offenders for three years from release from a residential facility (secure correctional facility, contract care facility or non-secure facilities). TYC's 1999 Review of Program Effectiveness Study (1999) found that three years after being released from a TYC facility, only 2.6 percent of those juveniles adjudicated for a sexual crime had been re-

arrested for a violent sex offense (aggravated assault, sexual assault or indecency with a child by contact). Information on non-contact sex offenses was not included in this study.

At this time, it is noted that the focus of this paper is male juvenile sex offenders and does not offer information on female offenders. Female juvenile sex offenders are excluded based on time constraints and relevancy to the pool of juveniles used for this study. This population deserves individual attention. A place to start looking might be Ray's (1995) research comparing male and female children with sexual behavior problems. Further research on female juvenile sex offenders is encouraged, as a scarcity of research in this area exists.

Possible Recidivism Characteristics of Male Juvenile Sex Offenders

Different studies used varying definitions for risk factors, including terms such as risk indicators, juvenile sex offender characteristics, deviant sexual arousal patterns, and sexual aggression characteristics just to name a few. For the sake of this paper, all of these terms are assumed to refer to a constellation of characteristics that may be deemed as factors affecting the re-commission of a sexual crime by a juvenile sex offender, hereto referred to as a *risk factor*. There are a number of different factors put forth as possible indicators of recidivism for juvenile sex offenders. One of the factors supported by a majority of the juvenile sex offender literature is the presence of a past criminal history (Kahn & Chambers, 1991; Shields 1995). The past history can include violent and non-violent offenses. Gerdes, Gourley and Cash (1995), in their study of a supervision assessment tool being used in Utah with juvenile sex offenders, propose that a more reliable factor is the presence of past sexual crimes (both adjudicated and non-

adjudicated). However, they did not make a distinction between contact (ex. aggravated rape) and non-contact sexual (ex. voyeurism) crimes.

Another factor cited by Shields (1995) in his validation of Becker and Kaplan's (1988) theory of adolescent sexual aggression was poor academic performance. Shields defines poor academic performance as failed a grade in school, suspended or expelled from school, and/or poor classroom behavior. Though he does not offer as explicit a definition, Hunter agrees that poor academic performance is a risk factor. In fact, Hunter (1999) reports that between 30 and 60 percent of sexually assaultive juveniles experience academic difficulties.

A somewhat controversial risk factor is the presence of a history of abuse-physical, emotional and/or sexual- (Rubinstein, Yeager, Goodstein, & Lewis, 1992; Becker & Kaplan, 1988). Research shows that a history of sexual abuse does not instantly doom a person to become a sex offender. Awad and Saunder's (1989) study suggests that the reported incidence of a history of sexual abuse amongst juvenile sex offenders is consistent with the incidence of reports from other delinquent groups and the general population. However research does indicate that the presence of past sexual abuse is a dynamic factor that may affect a juvenile sex offender's tendency to re-offend (Hunter, 1999).

The findings regarding physical abuse are mixed. Research done by Becker and Kaplan (1988) and Hunter (1999) support a history of physical abuse as a possible indicator of recidivism. However, Shields (1995) in his validation of Becker and Kaplan's Risk Factors (cited in Shields, 1995) stated that his study, following 800 non-

sex offending juvenile and 52 juvenile sex offenders, indicated that physical abuse was not strongly predictive of an adolescent's tendency to re-offend sexually.

A profile of the characteristics of the victims of juvenile sex offenders may also present indicators of risk for recidivism (Gerdes et al., 1995). The gender of the victim is one possible victim characteristic factor. Hunter and Becker (1994) and Kahn (1991) found that the male sexual offenders who offend against another male have a higher chance of recidivating. In contrast, it should also be noted that other research findings do not support this factor. Rasmussen (1999) postulates that those sex offenders with a greater number of female victims were actually more at risk to re-offend sexually. Another victim characteristic that seems indicative of greater risk for recidivism is the presence of multiple victims (Hunter, in press).

One final aspect that many studies fail to address, due to limitations on technical and financial resources and time and sample size, is the different subgroups present in the juvenile sex offender population and the ways in which recidivism characteristics may differ between these groups. Only a few studies acknowledge different subgroups of juvenile sex offenders and how their recidivism characteristics might differ from one another. Hunter (1999 and in press), states that there can be a distinction drawn between juvenile sex offenders who perpetrate against peers and adults and those that perpetrate against younger children (as defined by the abuser being 5 or more years older than the victim). While it is acknowledged that there may be a distinction between subtype of offender, this study did not examine the differences between offense type.

METHODOLOGY

Study Population and Sample

The study population was comprised of males who were adjudicated to TYC, and placed in a secure facility, for committing a registerable sex offense prior to their 18th birthdays or who were adjudicated to TYC for another offense, but have a history of referrals for sex offenses. These youth were all discharged from TYC between the ages of 18 and 19. A secure facility is here defined as a guarded, fenced institution which confines offenders to its grounds for all or most of the day, and has a structured daily routine for all residents to follow.

The initial population was N=72 adjudicated sex offenders, all of whom have served time in a TYC facility and been discharged prior to 2000. This "sample" is actually the entire population of offenders from TYC that meet the above requirements. All of the offenders in the population were male. There were no offenders who were released at age 20, or 21, which is the age that TYC must release any offender from its custody, that met the time requirements for recidivism. After controlling for a follow-up period of four years, data was only available on N= 49 juvenile sex offenders. This population comprised the final sample size used for this study.

Measurement

Recidivism is defined here as rearrest for the commission of a new felony sex offense within three years of release from a secure TYC facility. The offender need only be rearrested one time for a felony sex offense to have it count as recidivism. A felony sex offense can include any contact or non-contact offense, performed without the legal consent of the victim, and involving threats or coercion of the victim, and the use of, or

threat of, violence (TYC, 1998). These sex offenses include sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, rape, attempted rape, sexual molestation, and indecency with a child. These are all crimes for which an individual would need to be registered as a sex offender if convicted, according to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure (1999).

The dependent variable in the study will be the level of overall sexual recidivism, according to the above definition of recidivism. The independent variables will include the score on the Static-99 and the level of risk that each member of the sample population receives. The individual items on the scale will also be examined, to determine what particular characteristics are more powerful predictors of recidivism.

Data Collection Procedures

Background information on all offenders in the sample will be collected from TYC records contained on computer and microfilm. Background data to be collected for each offender includes: a) history of all criminal referrals, b) information about the victims in each sex offense, such as age, gender and relation to the offender, c) the out-of-home placement history of the offenders, d) their educational history, and e) other pertinent information, such as psychological diagnoses or family history information (See Appendix H for a copy of the data collection worksheet). All of the data collected was not used in the present study, but will be used by TYC for future research.

The information collected will be used to score the Static-99. The Static-99 is a 10-item scale, which includes questions about the number and nature of prior offenses (both sexual and non-sexual), marital status and age, among others. All offenders are scored based on the answers to the questions, using the review committee's changes to the scoring procedure. Those who score four to twelve points are considered high risk,

and receive a rating of 1, while those who receive zero to three points are considered only a moderate risk and receive a rating of 2

Once the sample offenders were scored on the instrument, their assessed risk of recidivism will be compared to actual recidivism data collected on the sample from TYC, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and Texas Department of Public Safety (TDPS) data. The evaluators were unaware of the recidivism data until the evaluations had been completed. Comparing the data gave an overall percentage of recidivism in the population, and allowed comparisons to determine if the offenders considered "high-risk" actually recidivated and what the percentage of predicted re-offenders actually did recidivate.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data Analysis Procedure

All of the data collected on the individual offenders, as well as their scores on the Static-99, were entered into Excel spreadsheets by the researchers. The spreadsheets were in turn converted into statistical data by the TYC Director of Research, using the SAS computer analysis software. Of the 75 offenders for which information was collected, three were considered not usable due to problems with the data, resulting in an actual study population of N=72. Again, this is the entire population of TYC sex offenders that were discharged at age 18 or 19, and for which three-year follow-up data was available. It should not be considered a sample of the total juvenile sex offender population, either in Texas or the nation as a whole.

Results

The 72 sex offenders were scored on the Static-99 and given a risk rating. Table One shows the breakdown of risk level between moderate and high risk. Note that there

is no differentiation for age in any of the data analyses, and the 18- and 19- years olds are included together.

Table 1

<i>Static-99 Risk Level</i>	<i>Number (% of Total)</i>
Moderate Risk	41 (57%)
High Risk	31 (43%)
Total	72 (100%)

Thirty-one out of 72 offenders were assessed to be high-risk for sexual re-offending on the Static-99. Three offenders, or 4.2 percent of the study population, were arrested for a new sex offense within three years. All three recidivists were rated as high-risk and comprised 9.7 percent of the high-risk sub-population. This low recidivism rate is consistent with the low sexual recidivism rates reported in the literature, and in TYC's Review of Program Effectiveness (Texas Youth Commission, 1999).

While the initial results did predict that the recidivists would be high-risk offenders, the low recidivism rate presented some problems. The rate of sexual recidivism in this study was too low to make firm conclusions about the significance of the Static-99's predictive power for this population. Further, the low recidivism rate made it difficult to conduct an item-analysis of the Static-99 questions and determine which were most significant as predictors of recidivism.

In order to achieve more significant results, without compromising the integrity of the study, the data was rerun using a four-year time span for recidivism, rather than three. Of the original 72 offenders used in the study, four-year follow-up data was available for

49 offenders, almost two-thirds of the initial number. Results from the follow up analysis show a stronger version of the relationship observed by the original analysis.

Table Two gives a break down of the 49 offenders and their risk rating on the Static-99. As can be observed, the percentage of high-risk offenders to moderate risk offenders remains the same as in the original comparison. Changing the sample size and follow-up period did not result in skewing the population in a different direction.

Table 2

<i>Static-99 Risk Level</i>	<i>Number (% of Total)</i>
Moderate Risk	28 (57%)
High Risk	21 (43%)
Total Recidivism	4 (8.2%)
Total	49 (100%)

After four years, four offenders, or 8.2 percent of the total population sexually recidivated. All four recidivists were from the 21 high-risk offenders in this sample, comprising 19 percent of this subgroup. Table Three shows the percentage of sexual recidivism for each score received on the Static-99. The only score that had a high rate of sexual recidivism was for a score of six, with 66% recidivism. A score of four, the minimum score for entry into the High-Risk category, had a recidivism rate of only seven- percent.

Table 3

<i>Static-99 Score</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>4-year Sexual Recidivism</i>
2	12(24%)	0%
3	16(33%)	0%
4	15(31%)	7%
5	3(6%)	33%
6	3(6%)	66%

In order to more fully understand the predictive power of the Static-99, an analysis of the factors that make up the Static-99 was run to determine the statistical significance of the instrument's results, and to discover which items had the best predictive ability. A test was conducted using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) for each item on the scale, as well as the predictive power of both being rated High Risk and the Total Score on the instrument. Statistical significance for the r was assessed at $p \leq .05$ and $p \leq 0.10$.

Table Four shows the coefficient (r) and the percent of variance accounted for, and the level of significance for each item on the Static-99, as well as including categories for High-Risk designation, and for the Total Score on the instrument. The table also includes the number of recidivists who scored a one on each item or were rated High-Risk.

Table 4

Static-99 Category	Number	Coefficient (r)/(% of variance)	Significance Level
Total Score	4	0.408 (16%)	0.004
High Risk	4	0.344 (12%)	0.015
Item 5 (non-contact sex conviction)	1	0.315 (10%)	0.027
Item 1 (# of prior sex offenses)	2	0.304 (9%)	0.034
Item 3 (Non-relative victim)	4	0.280 (8%)	0.051
Item 8 (Index:Non-sexual assault)	1	0.234 (5%)	0.104
Item 4 (Any male victim)	3	0.222 (5%)	0.126
Item 9 (Prior non-sexual assault)	1	0.183 (3%)	0.207
Item 2 (Any stranger victim)	1	0.146 (2%)	0.318
Item 10(>4 sentencing occasions)	0	0.043 (0.2%)	0.769
Item 6 (Married for 2 Years)	4	*	*
Item 7 (Age)	4	*	*
* indicates no variation on item			

Using the Pearson's coefficient showed that the individual items had at most a moderate correlation with recidivism. The percent of variance accounted for will not total 100 percent in this study, because all the individual variables are not parts of the same whole, but even with a moderate correlation, some of the results were significant while others were not. Total score on the instrument had the highest correlation (0.408), while being rated High-Risk was second. Both of these items were significant at the 0.05 level.

Of the particular scale items, Item 5 (any non-contact sex convictions) was found to moderately correlate with recidivism at the 0.05 level of significance. Item 1 (number of prior sex offense charges/convictions) also showed a significant moderate correlation with recidivism. Having a victim who was a non-relative (stranger and/or acquaintance) also had a low moderate correlation with recidivism, and was significant below the 0.10 level ($p = 0.051$). All four recidivists sexually offended against non-relatives, but the small sample size may have prevented this item from having a stronger correlation.

Several of the items did not show any significance. Items Four and Eight on the Static-99 (Contact sex offense with a male victim and Index: non-sexual assault respectively) had low correlations with recidivism, but the results for these items were not significant at the 0.10 level. It should be noted, however, that three out of four recidivists had male victims, even if the correlation was not significant.

Items 9 and 10 on the Static-99 look at general violent and criminal history as predictors of sexual recidivism. These items account for those non-sexual offenses that have resulted in adjudication and conviction, and attempt to link a history of assaultive or criminal behavior with sexual recidivism. Neither of these was found to be a significant

predictor of recidivism. Only one recidivist had a prior conviction for non-sexual assault, and none of the recidivists had more than four sentencing occasions. No statistical comparison was made between Item 6 (married for two years) and Item 7 (age at risk). This is because all the offenders in the study received a score of one for each of these questions. These questions did not explain any of the variance in the sample, because there was no difference on these two items.

Discussion

Any discussion of the results of this study must be tempered with the knowledge that the relatively small sample size and low recidivism rates make it difficult to generalize the findings to the larger population of juvenile sex offenders. With this in mind however, certain patterns in the findings can be discerned. First and foremost, the Static-99 was able to predict the sexual recidivists in the study. All four recidivists in the four-year recidivism group were rated High Risk on the Static-99. A High-Risk rating, and the overall score on the instrument, was found to significantly correlate with recidivism, showing that the score on the instrument does matter in terms of predicting recidivism.

Even though the instrument did identify the sexual recidivists, it seems to rate far more offenders as high-risk than actually recidivated. This is especially evident when examining the percentage of actual sexual recidivism for each score category on the instrument. The score category of four shows the highest percentage of over-prediction, over-predicting probability of recidivism by 93%. As the score on the instrument increased, the predictive accuracy of the instrument increased. For example, a score of six had a 34% rate of over-prediction. The issues with over-prediction in this study can

be better understood by comparing them to the results of Hanson and Thornton's original study (See Appendix I for a table of their original results).

Hanson and Thornton's original study showed over-prediction on the instrument as well. For both studies however, the same pattern was observed- the higher the risk score, the higher the recidivism rate and the lower the percentage of false positives. In both studies, a score of six was associated with the highest level of predictive accuracy, 66% in this study and 39% in their study, with a comparable follow-up period – four years and five years respectively.

Hanson and Thornton used a follow-up period that was considerably longer than that used in this study (five, ten and fifteen years compared to four years). However, their highest rates of recidivism occurred in the initial five-year follow-up period, especially within the first year after release. As the follow-up period increased, the rates of recidivism declined considerably. While using only a four-year follow-up in this study may have missed some recidivists, it covers the period of time that offenders will be the most likely to recidivate sexually.

The 8.2 percent overall recidivism rate in the four-year follow-up group is still relatively low, especially when 43 percent of the four-year follow up group were rated High Risk to reoffend. This recidivism rate is consistent with the lower rates of sexual recidivism found by TYC in their treatment effectiveness research (Texas Youth Commission, 1999) and in other research as well (Becker & Hunter, 1993; Rubinstein et al, 1993; Sipe, 1998).

The low recidivism rate means that only four out of twenty-one predicted recidivists (19%) actually recidivated. Hanson and Thornton (1999) found an overall 5-

year recidivism rate of 32 percent for all offenders that scored four points or higher on the Static-99. Since a significant majority of high-risk offenders did not re-offend in this sample, it appears that the Static-99 is over-predicting the risk of recidivism for this population.

Looking at the analysis of the different factors may help explain the predictive power of the instrument. It is important to mention that many of the risk factors the Static-99 examines were identified in the adult literature. The research on juveniles is less extensive and there are fewer valid studies identifying risk factors for juveniles. Therefore, many of the factors in the adult literature may not have predictive validity for juveniles. This may have contributed to the results that were seen when conducting an item analysis of the Static-99.

Some of the predictive risk factors identified in the literature were significant in this study. Having a history of prior contact sexual offenses and non-contact sex offenses significantly predicted recidivism. The presence of a victim who was a non-relative (either a stranger or an acquaintance) also significantly correlated with recidivism at below the 0.10 level, and was the only item describing the relationship between the offender and victim that did have significant results.

Offending against strangers only was identified as a predictive factor in the adult literature, but here did not show up as significant at all. In fact, very few of the offenders in the whole sample had a stranger victim. This may indicate that juveniles are more likely to sexually offend against people they know, and have more opportunity to offend against, but points to the need for further research in this area to see if this holds true.

Having a prior non-sexual criminal or violent history was not found to be a significant predictor of sexual recidivism. The Static-99 includes these items because they have been found to be predictive of sexual recidivism for adults, yet neither of them predicted risk of sexual recidivism in juveniles. Item 10 on the instrument asks if an offender had more than four sentencing occasions, meaning here that a juvenile would have been adjudicated and received a sentence more than four times by age 17. Only one offender in the entire sample managed to do this, and he was not one of the recidivists. Juvenile offenders may have multiple referrals for crimes, but few have a history of more than four sentences.

Analyses of age and marital status were problematic. The Static-99 evaluates risk at the age of the offender becomes a threat to society. The high-risk age for the instrument is identified as 18-24.99 years. Taken on its own, age did not predict any of the variance in re-offending, because all the juveniles in the sample were released as young adults and scored the same on this item. It is a variable that the offender cannot control, and whose predictive accuracy may not be verifiable with this population. A similar situation occurs in terms of marital status. Marriage for the Static-99 is defined as two people living together and sharing expenses in a romantic relationship for more than two years. None of the offenders in the study met those criteria. No conclusions could be drawn about its predictive ability since all offenders received the same score.

CONCLUSIONS

The Static- 99 correctly identified those four high-risk juveniles who did recidivate sexually. However, the instrument also over-predicted the number of high-risk offenders by a wide margin with only 19 percent of the offenders rated High-Risk

recidivating sexually. Only a few of the questions on the instrument were statistically significant predictors of juvenile recidivism. These factors were the number of prior sex offenses, having any non-contact sex offense, and the presence of a victim that was not related to the offender.

Other items did not significantly predict recidivism, including history of non-sexual assaults, multiple prior sentencing occasions, or victimizing only strangers. Age and marital status did not predict recidivism because every offender scored the same on these items. Therefore, no conclusions can be made about their predictive validity with this population.

The small sample size and low sexual recidivism rate make these results tentative at best, and point to the need for further study. However, these results do show that the Static-99 may concentrate too heavily on factors that do not predict sexual recidivism among juvenile offenders. This is especially important in light of the Risk Assessment Review Committee's decision to alter the scoring method for the instrument. Their decision to lower the High-Risk cutoff point to four caught two offenders, but also included 16 offenders who did not recidivate. Keeping the High-Score cutoff at six would allow for far fewer false positives than the lower cut-off score.

Over-predicting risk may be acceptable in some circumstances, especially when issues of public safety are involved. However, concerns about risk of recidivism are sometimes based on inaccurate beliefs about recidivism. The belief is often that those who are rated a high risk to re-offend will recidivate. As the results of this study, and even Hanson and Thornton's (1999) original study show, the rates of re-offending are low, even among those who are rated High-Risk. More importantly, they are low at the

period of time when offenders are at their highest risk to re-offend. Such low rates of re-offending do not support the idea that juvenile offenders as a group will be highly likely to recidivate sexually. Therefore, using an instrument that over-rates the risk of recidivism for juvenile sex offenders would not be a great benefit for protecting the public.

Over predicting risk is costly in terms of time and resources. Being rated High-Risk, and the more wide spread notification practices that go with it, may also have some negative consequences for juvenile sex offenders trying to reintegrate successfully into the community. Many of these offenders may not be a high risk, yet they will be labeled as such. As a result, they may face public shame and have difficulties finding a job or a place to live because the neighborhood is aware of their presence and will not let them stay. Ward (1999) gives examples of registered sex offenders who faced violent reprisals at the hands of the community. Such dangerous vigilantism is a possibility that sex offenders face.

Many of the factors upon which the Static-99 was based were not shown to be predictive here. If the Static-99 was created using static factors that do not predict juvenile recidivism, the instrument's ability to differentiate between juveniles who are high-risk and those who are not high-risk as young adults is questionable. This may point to the need to retool the Static-99 for the juvenile sex offender population, or create a wholly new instrument that will more sharply predict recidivism.

Study Limitations

There are several study limitations that preclude generalizing the findings of this report to the larger population of adults who committed their sex offense(s) as juveniles.

The small sample size is one of the first things that may limit the generalizability of this study. Also, the four-year follow-up will miss a number of offenders who will eventually recidivate sexually, even though it will probably catch the majority of recidivists. In addition, the low overall rate of actual recidivism makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions by comparison of recidivists to non-recidivists. Finally, this study did not differentiate between different subgroups (ex. rapist, child molesters, exhibitionists) of sex offenders. The original validation study performed by Hanson and Thornton (1999) found that the Static-99 had similar predictive power for rapists and child molesters among adult offender subgroups. Better predictive accuracy may be found when the Static-99 is applied to different subgroups of this population.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Based upon the conclusions and methodological limitations found in this study, the following recommendations are intended to further the research in this area, and perhaps shed more light on the results of this study.

- First, this study must be replicated with a larger sample size. This will allow the results of this research to be either verified or disproved, and may make the results more conclusive and applicable to the larger sex offender population.
- Conduct another validation study on the Static-99 that compares types of offenders. If more juveniles are being rated High-Risk than ever actually recidivate, perhaps the instrument has more validity when used on a certain type of offender. Since some of the factors associated with recidivism in the literature were not found to be significant

in this study, perhaps there needs to be some differentiation between offender subgroups. This may help pinpoint who the Static-99 is most effective in assessing.

- Encourage more research into the study of characteristics which are indicative of juvenile sexual recidivism. Further research in this area would help lay the groundwork for the creation of sound risk assessment tools for use with juveniles or expansion of tools such as the Static-99.

To The Risk Assessment Review Committee

Of particular importance to this study is providing feedback and guidelines to the Risk Assessment Review Committee that is charged with using the Static-99 on adults in the state of Texas. To this Committee, the following recommendations are made:

- Consider re-adopting the original scoring method used by Hanson and Thornton. This will increase the predictive accuracy of the instrument and eliminate most of the false positives.
- TYC and TJPC need to continue collecting information using the data collection sheet. This will allow for the accumulation of more data on the characteristics that may be indicative of juvenile sexual re-offending.
- The committee should commission another study in three to four years re-validating the Static-99 with adults who committed their crimes as juveniles. With increased time, a larger population sample will form. Typically, a larger sample lends itself to being better able to generalize the findings.
- The Committee should stay abreast of current research on risk assessment tools by performing periodic literature reviews. This helps increase the probability that the most appropriate assessment tools is being used with this population.

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